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ABSTRACT
          The Texas Metro Network (TMN) is an informal group of
Head Start Directors and Executive Directors organizeu for the
purposes of improving the delivery of training and technical
assistance and for assisting communication between large scale Head
Start programs in the metropolitan areas of Texas. In pursuit of
these aims, each member unit of the TMN selected an area of program
management that it performed well and wrote a paper describing that
area of program management. The papers describing the model program
activities are provided in this handbook. The first paper describes
the TMN in terms of differences and similarities among members and
between metro and smaller, rural programs. Subsequent papers provide
models for (1) an employee evaluation system, (2) program development
for children with multiple handicaps, (3) networking within an
information and referral system, (4) financial auditing, (5)
administrative reorganization of out-of-compliance programs delegated
to agencies, (6) managing information flow, and (7) parent
participation. Cost and training factors associated with
implementation were taken into consideration when model management
areas were selected. In addition, models chosen were congruent with
Head Start standards. (RH)

Texas Head Start Metro Models

2

THE TEXAS HEAD START METRO MODELS

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PREFACE

The Texas Metro Network came into being during the fall of 1981 at a meeting that took place at Texas Tech University. The Network is an informal group of Head Start Directors and Executive Directors from the state's largest programs, which are located at Austin, Dallas, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and South Texas-Hidalgo County. The group was organized for the purpose of improving the delivery of training and technical assistance and, also, as a means of opening up communication channels amongst themselves. During their initial meeting, the Metro Network members shared common problems and concerns, and agreed that the Network could be an important vehicle to help them stay informed and abreast of happenings in Head Start. To maintain the interest of the group, they decided to undertake activities where all the members could participate and share in their development. The publication, THE TEXAS HEAD START METRO MODELS, is the first activity of the group.

During the planning for the publication, it was decided that each of the Metro programs would select an area that it considered itself to be strong in and that it could perform well. Among the considerations for the selection of their model, the individual programs were encouraged to look at the cost factor involved as well as the training that would have to be accomplished in order to implement the model. In addition, there was not be be any conflict between the activity and Head Start standards.

The publication is being disseminated to all Head Start programs in Texas with the hope that the "Models" presented here

iv   6

Mary Tom Riley
Alfredo R. Flores

7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

may be of some help to them. While it may
not be possible to implement them in total,
it may be worthwhile to extract portions
of them and, with some modification, be able
to apply them to their local situation.

                        Mary Tom Riley
                        Alfredo R. Flores

THE TEXAS HEAD START METRO MODELS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TEXAS HEAD START METRO NETWORK

Ft Worth x x Dallas

x El Paso

Austin
   x   Houston
                 x
   x San Antonio

South
Texas-
Hidalgo
   x

1

THE METRO NETWORK

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The Texas Head Start Metro programs
are evenly distributed geographically
throughout the state. The North Texas
area is represented by Dallas and Fort
Worth, while the West Texas area has El
Paso. `South Texas has the South Texas and
Hidalgo`County program, while the Central
Texas area is represented by San Antonio
and Austin. The Coastal Bend area has the
Houston program within its bounds. The
common denominator that ties all of these
Metro programs together is the fact that
they each have over a quarter million people
in their area and serve over 750 children
in the full-year Head Start program. They
enroll approximately 38% of all of the Head
Start children in Texas.

METRO PROGRAM SIMILARITIES

There are many ways in which the Metro
programs are alike. First of all, they have
to meet or exceed the Head Start standards.
They have to maintain a good quality pro-
gram for their children and their families.
In addition, they have the capability of
conducting most of their own training and,

2

in most cases, they have a staff person res-
ponsible for carrying out this function. This
is especially important for the Metro programs
because of the large numbers of staff that
they employ. Therefore, the need for a con-
centrated and coordinated effort for train-
ing is apparent. There is a constant staff
turnover which makes training a reoccurring
need and, therefore, a top priority.

METRO PROGRAM DIFFERENCES

Though Metro programs are similar in many
respects, there are also many differences
amongst them. One major difference is the
type of program sponsor that administors the
program; it can either be a Community Action
Agency (CAA) or a Limited Purpose Agency (LPA).
CAA's operate a variety of programs, of which
Head Start may only be one. LPA's tend to
focus on early childhood programs and, there-
fore, devote all of their energies to them.
In certain instances, the operation of the
program can be delegated either to public
schools or community non-profit groups. Some
sponsors may operate part of the program and
may, also, delegate portions of it.
Another significant difference among the
Metro programs is the management style of the
sponsoring Executive Directors and the Head
Start Directors. These styles differ as a
result of the professional backgrounds of
those administrators. Some come from Busin-
ess, Teaching, Social Work, and some may be
products of Head Start career development
through progression and promotions in their
programs. These differences are reflected in
program operations and can be seen in the
processes used in administration, such as
personnel management or curriculum selection

3

and implementation.   Though these stylistic differences are apparent, the outcome is the same in that they do operate quality programs for the children and their families.

METRO AND RURAL/MIDSIZE PROGRAM DIFFERENCES

It is a most difficult task to draw generalizations to describe program oper-ations in Metro as opposed to rural/mid-size programs because these generaliza-tions do not always fit every situation. However, there are definite patterns that emerge from each type of program operation and it is important to look at what these are.   This should provide us with a good basis for comparing programs so that we can observe what their needs are.   The most obvious difference can be easily de-tected by looking at enrollment figures. Metro programs enroll a minimum of 750 children while rural/midsize programs may have as few as 30 children enrolled.   The same can be said about staff since Metro programs may have over 200 staff while rural/midsize programs may have as few as six. It can easily be seen by looking at these enrollment and staff numbers that the log-istics involved for programming for child-ren as well as selecting, training, and evaluating staff demands a different ap-proach for each of the program types men-tioned.

Another difference between Metro and rural/midsize programs relates to the more formalized structure which is descriptive of Metro programs.   The rationale for this stems from the fact that Metro programs

4

tend to have individual coordinators for each of the major components, such as Education, Social Services, Parent Involvement, Health and Handicap Services. Since these coordinators may have responsibility only for their individual components, they tend to develop more formal operating methods and procedures, which provides for closer guidance and structure. Rural/midsize programs, because of their size, may have a Head Start Director who is also the coordinator for the Education, Social Services, Health, Parent Involvement, and Handicap, as well as the other components. Some of these programs may have a person who is responsible for two or three components, at best. For this reason, rural/midsize programs tend to be more informal and less structured than the Metro programs.

The parents served by Metro programs differ to some degree from the rural/midsize group in regards to vocational orientation and this has implications particularly for the development of the parent involvement plan. The Metro parents are more oriented to work which is related to manufacturing or which is of a technical nature, while parents of rural/midsize programs are more likely to be associated with agricultural related work or light manufacturing. It should be understood, however, that the Head Start parents in both types of programs are more likely to work in the unskilled sector rather than the skilled. The point of all this is that the Metro parents tend to work in more stressful situations than the rural/midsize program parents, because of such factors as transportation, traffic, high crime rates, and other similar problems associated with living in these environments.

The number and the type of resources available to Texas Head Start programs is,

5

16

also, another major difference between the
Metro programs and the rural/midsize pro-
grams. The Metro programs have recourse
to many more resources than the rural/mid-
size programs and this is because most of
the Social Service agencies are normally
located in the metropolitan areas. The
same is true of consultant specialists,
such as medical doctors, dentists, psychol-
ogists, psychiatrists, educational diag-
nosticians, and other such professionals
that Head Start has to rely on. While this
may sound like Metro programs have an
abundance of these resources available to
them, in reality their problem is the pro-
cess of securing those services. Most of
these agencies and consultants have wait-
ing lists that are incredibly long, and
parents, as well as Head Start personnel,
ha e problems securing appointments and
keeping them because of transportation
difficulties. The logistics involved in
securing these services for children and
their families is a puzzle that metro pro-
grams expend much of their energies trying
to solve.

NEED FOR METRO NETWORK

As can be seen from these differences
between the Metro and the rural/midsize
programs, a need existed for the Texas
Metro Network and that was the reason for
its formation. The effort to get the Ex-
ecutive Directors and the Head Start Dir-
ectors to discuss common concerns, to share
with one another successful aspects of pro-
gram operation, and to cooperate in design-
ing and implementing joint ventures can only

6

result in a better managed local program.

The Texas Training and Technical Assistance program has profitted from the Metro Network. There has been much willingness on the part of the Metro programs to share their ideas and expertise with rural/midsize programs. This, in turn, has benefited the Metro programs by making training more relevant and responsive to their needs. This was the goal of the Network.

A MODEL EMPLOYEE EVALUATION SYSTEM

James Strickland
Executive Director
Child, Inc.

THE PROBLEM

Your throat is dry, your palms are wet, and Excedrin is about to become another abused drug. "THE MONITORS" have just cited a stuck commode float valve in one center, the lack of minutes for parent group meetings in another, and a teacher in a third center who swears she never heard of "lesson plans". The monitors want answers, they want them now, and they want them from you. After all, the Head Start director in Tinyburg always is "on top of things" and, with your large, sophisticated organization, you should be able to do at least as well. Right?

Right! But... how does a Head Start director with twenty-two centers and a home base piogram stay "on top of things"?

Obviously, the "things" you and the Head Start director from Tinyburg stay on top of will differ. You will not have personal knowledge of every stuck valve, parent meeting, and lesson plan. But monitors, validators, etc., spend much of their time with smaller programs and, if your monitor does not understand your management system, you are likely to be written off as just another high-paid, overrated boob that seldom even visits your own centers.

For years, large Head Start programs
have held countless training sessions for
their teachers, aides, center directors,
and social workers drilling the import-
ance of compliance with performance stand-
ards. For those same years, the directors
of those large programs have had the dry
mouth, wet palm, Excedrin experience
associated with being found out of compli-
ance.

Some of the well-trained staff just
did nct seem too concerned if maintenance
reports, lesson plans, parent meeting min-
utes, etc., were left undocumented.

An informal survey of both large and
small Head Start programs revealed that few
job descriptions, and even fewer person-
nel evaluation forms, are "keyed" to the
Head Start Performance Standards. Occas-
sionally, there was some correlation in a
general way, but few evaluations and no
job descriptions were ever as explicit
as the instruments used by program mon-
itors.

The lack of correlation, however, did
not seem to affect the efficiency of smal-
ler programs, perhaps, because employees
in such programs, have a chance to have
more personal contact with the Head Start
director. The explicit program require-
ments were passed along on an informal ba-
sis. What worried the Head Start director
at a smaller agency, soon also worried the
aide. But the aide at a larger agency sel-
dom sees the director, and could not care
less what his or her worries might be.

Ah ha! The solution is simple' Dir-
ectors of large programs need only have as
much "personal contact" with their staff
as do directors of smaller programs. It
would prcbably work... when donkeys fly
and someone discovers the 48-hour day.

10

Although personal contact is an effective tool, the director of a program with two hundred employees cannot hope to have the same degree of personal contact as the director of a small program. Some method was needed to supplement what personal contact is possible; a method by which the employee, who seldom sees the Head Start director, can clearly understand how his or her job will help the program meet a specific set of performance standards; a method for translating the Head Start Performance Standards into job descriptions and personnel evaluations.

THE AUSTIN PLAN

Determining what was needed, however, was easy compared to getting it done.

Step one was to list each performance standard and decide precisely what tasks must be completed to ensure that each standard was met. Fortunately, much of that work had already been done in the "Guidance for Assessing Compliance" column of the original SAVI. However, even that had to be refined.

The resulting sixty-four page, single-spaced "refinement" listed (hopefully) every task and sub-task and sub-sub-task needed to (1) meet; (2) follow up on; and, (3) document every performance standard.

Once completed, this "task list" soon became the focus for all our agency's planning. It allowed tasks to be prioritized, assigned, coordinated, and scheduled with a clarity not possible before its development.

The list made it obvious that one person had to take responsibility for doing and documenting each task; that the task had to be followed up on by a second person; coordinated with two or three others; and all those substeps must be completed before some related task could begin.

However, while useful, the task list was not especially innovative (basically a "souped-up" SAVI). Also, it alone would not accomplish the original goal of "personalizing the performance standards".

Step two was to revise all job descriptions and to make sure that when all the "new improved" job descriptions were added together that they covered every item on the task list. If they did not, something was obviously not going to get done and a non-compliance would result.

The process was a case study in bureaucracies. The first reaction of our personnel was to disclaim responsibility for any task not previously assigned to them (the "it's not my job" approach). Later, when it became clear that funds were to be allocated on the basis of tasks, the cry became "She (or he) is trying to do my job". However, the results were job desriptions which matched the performance standards and personnel who knew exactly what piece of the performance standard puzzle they held.

However, getting everyone to properly place their piece of the puzzle was a different issue and the next major step.

Since job descriptions had, heretofore, been rather general and open to interpretation, almost every teacher, aide, social worker, and supervisor had a different (sometimes drastically different) idea about what was "satisfactory". Every year at evaluation and raise time,

we could anticipate a number of disagree-
ments.

To overcome this problem and to en-
sure that the new job descriptions were
not relegated to the same degree of ob-
scurity as the old ones, we, also, re-
vised the evaluations and instituted a
monthly "follow-up" plan.

We based the "new evaluation forms"
on the new job descriptions. Although we
completed them annually as a part of the
"follow-up plan", data for the new eval-
uations are supplied by the employee
monthly.

Supervisors now verify this infor-
mation on an on-going basis as one of their
"follow-up" tasks. Missed or incomplete
lesson plans, lack of volunteers in the
classroom, or home visits left undone are
now accounted for or a monthly basis and
there are fewer surprises at evaluation
and raise time.

THE ADVANTAGES

Once the monthly data began to come
in, it also became evident that the per-
formance standards-based system would
also be useful in establishing the train-
ing plan and completing the agency's an-
nual self-assessment.

Clarifying how all program activities
tied back to the performance standards
helped each activity fit with all others.
Job descriptions, personnel evaluations,
training plans, SAVI, career development
plan, division plans, and budgets all be-
came related to one another, no longer iso-
lated tasks done solely for the purpose of

24

satisfying a requirement.

Topics for training began to focus on the items that the monthly data indicated needed the most work. The agency self-assessment process became simply a composite of the employees' monthly self-assessments. Many non-compliances can now be noticed and corrected before they become severe.

Also, the number of personnel complaints about evaluations diminished and those that remained were more clearly defined and related to program issues as opposed to personality differences. There were fewer charges of "She didn't give me a raise because she didn't like me". The disagreements that did remain generated some very useful and healthy questions such as, "What is a good lesson plan!"; "Who really is responsible for getting the volunteers into the classroom?"; and "What constitutes parent involvement in helping with lesson plans?"

As a result of one such question, it became obvious that staff, not even the Head Start director, could not be held totally responsible for meeting many fo the performance standards which relate to parents. Parents, themselves, would have to accept some of the responsibility. This realization resulted in a clearly defined job description for parents, a separate job description for Parent Policy Council representatives, and even more detailed job descriptions and evaluations for officers of the Parent Policy Council. As a result, parent involvement at all levels increased and there is less friction between staff and members of the P.P.C. Each has a clearly defined job and usually sticks to it.

14

25

THE DIFFICULTIES

One of the first problems encountered was the sheer magnitude of the work and money required if <u>all</u> performance standards were to be met equally well. We had to prioritize the tasks, completing those first that were most important or were pre-requisites for others.

Also, the job of just keeping records on the individual employee's performance required a great deal of prioritizing. It was not practical to keep special records on every task because some were self-rec-ording, and the work on some served as re-liable "indicators" of the work done on others.

As a result of prioritizing, the number of items recorded monthly by each teacher was reduced to twelve or thirteen. The actual items vary, depending on a part-icular area the program wishes to empha-size or a weakness that needs correction. In Austin, we had a particular problem with lack of home visits. Just by keeping track of the number of home visits each teacher was doing, we increased visitations by 400%.

Home visits were a particular pro-blem because they were, also, the focus of another one of the difficulties: Defini-tions. The performance standards require at least two "home visits" per year, but do not clearly define what is considered a "home visit". When we began to try to count home visits, lesson plans, referrals, and assessments, we discovered that every-one was counting something different. A home visit in one center was a least a thirty-minute visit in which the teacher sat in the parent's home and discussed

15

ways of better working with the child. In another, it was a short conference at the parent's job site, and in a third, it was just "driving by the parent's house, not seeing a car, and going home". Discussions with other Head Start program consultants and various H.H.S. personnel served to reconfirm the local experience. Definitions vary and they vary widely.

Obviously, a set of definitions and clearly defined guidelines for what to count were needed.

It took slightly over a year and several revisions, but such a manual was finally completed. Where possible, the best available general instructions and definitions were used. However, since opinions vary so widely, many of the "Austin" definitions may be applied only to Austin, and even those are subject to change.

For the sake of local comparability, definitions of a good lesson plan, a good home visit, a referral, a parent group meeting, do exist.

Our sharing the same definitions ("good" or "bad" as they may be) has been of immeasurable benefit in conducting evaluations, solving disagreements, allocating resources, and just generally communicating with one another.

Having explicit definitions and priorities and job descriptions, however, made it very clear that staff could not be held totally responsible for meeting all the standards. Parents and staff, alike, had always given lip service to the "team approach", but when no one showed up at a meeting, the "team" members would usually begin to blame one another.

With staff tasks so clearly outlined

16

and evaluated, it could easily be deter-
mined whether or not the staff member had
done his or her part. As mentioned earl-
ier, some staff began to feel that parents
were not being held equally accountable.
As a result of a series of very frank dis-
cussions, the P.P.C. decided to develop
job descriptions for all parents; job des-
criptions and evaluations for all officers
of the P.P.C.; and a special committee made
up of 50% staff and 50% parents.

The "Staff/Parent Relations Committee"
serves as a buffer for both the Head Start
director and the chairperson of the P.P.C.,
studying staff complaints about parents or
parent complaints about staff who might
not be fulfilling their job descriptions.

As a further check to ensure that
performance standards are met, the officers
of the P.P.C. monitor themselves via the
evaluation forms, which they complete on
one another.

The simple recitation of the plan,
the difficulties, and the way they were
overcome gives the unrealistic impression
that implementation was a smooth process.
It was not!

No matter how it is approached, clearly
defining tasks and holding people account-
able for them is threatening; the more in-
secure the person feels, the greater the
threat, and the greater the threat, the
greater the reaction. Even with all the
in-service training provided by Head Start,
there are still many who feel threatened
by having their personal evaluations so
closely tied with the standards on which
the program is evaluated.

Although the move toward greater ac-
countability was a slow process (over a
four-year period), and care was taken to

17

build in support for those who felt overly
threatened, these safeguards did not always
work. From time to time, both staff mem-
bers and parents found the process un-
comfortable.

Tasks left undone could no longer be
ignored. Supervisors had to hold someone
accountable or take the responsibility
themselves, both unpleasant alternatives.

Some chose to allow the work to go
undone and "adjust" the reports. Taking
disciplinary action against supervisors
who knowingly allowed false information
to be reported was one of the most dif-
ficult and traumatic parts of the trans-
action.

Despite such traumas, the program
now seems much stronger. Performance
standards and goals are being achieved
and documented. There remains healthy
dialogue over various parts of the plan,
and as a result of this dialogue, the
plan is continually being improved.

THE DANGERS

One of the major dangers to any sys-
tem which is the least bit successful is
that "success" breeds "complacency", the
sense that "it's done, now we can rest".

However, "resting" can be the down-
fall of the system. As with the example
of the traumatic incident where figures
were being falsified, the director of a
large agency can become too reliant on
"the reports". While they are necessary
for a large agency, they must be frequently
verified by the director's own observations.

More subtle, but equal, dangers lie
in the Head Start director thinking that
this, or any other plan, is the "only way".
It is an easy trap to fall into and sev-
erely limits the director's ability to ex-
plore different approaches which might
work even better. Therefore, formulators
of the "Austin Plan" solicit questions,
tips, plants suggestions, discussions,
and criticism.
    The Austin Plan is constantly being
refined and, though parts of it are work-
ing well, the agency's group membership
in the "Excedrin Anonymous" has not yet been
cancelled.

19
30

31

SPECIAL NEEDS SESSION

Wanda Smith
Head Start Director
Kathy White .
Handicap Service Coordinator
Dallas County Community Action Committee

PROBLEM

Although the presence of children with
mnlitiple handicaps is common within the
Dallas County Head Start centers, one cen-
ter was noted as having a significantly
greater percentage of multiple handicapped
children. An examination of our personnel
records showed us that this same center
experienced a proportionately higher rate
of staff turnover and staff absence than
many of our other Head Start centers. Per-
sonal visits to the center, also, indicated
that the teachers in this center were ex-
periencing extremely high levels of stress.

As soon as these pioblems were dis-
covered, training on individual handi-
capping conditions were conducted, Indiv-
idual Educational Plans were done, and
home visits and parent conferences were
conducted. Unfortunately, these measures
were not enough to remedy our problem.

NEED

We determined that handicapped child-

ren with such a large variety of special
needs at a deficient level needed consis-
tent follow-up, either individually or in
small groups. We, also, found that the
children that had been tested and diag-
nosed as having emotional disturbance
were causing multi-faceted problems with-
in this open classroom.

It was obvious that these multiple
handicapped children had problems that
were different and that they needed con-
sistant attention on an individual basis.
However, once these multiple handicapped
children began receiving the individual
attention that they needed, many of their
peers began emulating their behavior and
the classroom was in bedlam. Over half
of the 60 children enrolled in the center
began exhibiting various behavioral pro-
blems as a result of the sixteen that had
been diagnosed and intervention started.
Obviously, the teachers showed more anx-
iety and began expressing a greater de-
sire to be able to work more effectively
with all of the children enrolled.

As the support staff assigned to
the center, we recognized that most of
our time was being spent as role models
and that we were not spending enough
time addressing the causes of the center's
problems, nor were we spending enough
time at our other assigned locations. We
soon realized that the center staff had
developed a dependence on us and that they
were not willing to make independent judge-
ments on any situation.

22

33

HOW MODEL DEVELOPED

Through discussion involving the
Handicapped Coordinator, the Center Dir-
ector, Education Coordinator, and Social
Service Coordinator, it was determined
that the center had to become innovative
in its approach to the problem if the
center was to be a place that "good" ed-
ucational experiences happened for child-
ren. As a result of the problem, it was,
also, discovered that parent participation
in the classroom was down drastically.
After many hours of brainstorming, it was
decided by the group that a greater effort
would have to be made focusing on each
child's individual needs. The need for
each component to share all information
gathered on each child and his/her family,
as well as the teacher's observations
and, then, conducting a dialogue with all
concerned was to be underscored. A plan
of action would, then, be established and
implemented to help each child. This pro-
cess was termed a Special Needs Session.

HOW IT WORKS

Children are determined appropriate
for the Special Needs Session when they
have been diagnosed as having one or more
handicapping conditions that cannot, at
first, be effectively managed in a group
of children in a regular Head Start class-
room. Priority is given to children who
have demonstrated behavioral problems in
the classroom and who have been identified
as needing a more behaviorally structured
one-to-one environment.

The first step in the implementation
of this process is the staffing of each
child. The staffing includes the teacher,
teacher assistant, Nutritionist, Social
Service/Parent Involvement Coordinator,
Handicap Coordinator, Education Coordina-
tor, Health Coordinator or Health Aide, and
Center Director. Each child's history and
test results are discussed as well as other
pertinent information related to the prob-
lem. A decision is made by the group at
that time as to what children will be placed
in the Special Needs Session. Home visits
are scheduled with the parents so that their
input can become a part of the plan. This
is all in addition to the Individual Educa-
tion Plan and the work the parents do at
home.

The children are seen individually or,
when more effective, in groups of two or
three for approximately ten minute periods.
Activities are planned prior to sessions and
include development in speech, language
skills, visual, auditory perception skills,
fine motor skills and affective behavior. A
classroom teacher is designated to work
with the handicap coordinator in the sessions
and will eventually assume responsibility
of facilitating the sessions and train-
ing the other teachers. Each child's
progress is recorded each time he attends
a session and when it is felt he is doing
well enough to discontinue, a meeting is
held and he is dropped from the SNS list.
If a child shows little or no progess, a
special staffing is held with professional
consultants and other staff members that
are involved in the process to determine
what other services may be necessary.

24

RESULTS OF THE MODEL

Four of the main results of this model
are:

1. Cost Effectiveness - It eliminates the
cost of going outside of the program
and duplicating services that can be
provided by Head Start Personnel.

2. Better Organized Program - Conferring
and planning with Head Start staff, par-
ents and appropriate professionals and/or
agencies that work with handicapped child-
ren has led to an enhancement of knowl-
edge and better communication skills of
all involved. It has provided a structured
system by which a child receives full
benefit from our program.

3. Reduction of Staff Problems - The reduc-
tion of staff stress, high turnover, and
absence rate has been great. Staff has
acquired the necessary tools to deal effec-
tively with the problems and are not try-
ing to avoid dealing with them.

4. Increased Parent Participation - Parents
understand and are able to better cope with
handicapping conditions since behavioral
problems have become manageable. They do
not hesitate to come to the center and vol-
unteer on a regularly scheduled basis.

CASE HISTORY.

How It Really Works- The Case Study of
Eddie Galvan

25

August 29, 1979

Eighteen month old Eddie Galvan
(not his real name) was admitted to Child-
ren's Medical Center by his mother after
having a seizure. Mrs. Galvan reported
that during Eddie's seizure his eyes rolled
back, he slobbered, and his body went limp
for about five minutes. She reported that
Eddie had a history of seizures and had pre-
viously been given phenobarbital to control
them. An EEG was scheduled and his medica-
tion was resumed. Microcephaly was also
diagnosed, and a return visit was scheduled
for follow-up.

August 24, 1981

Thirty month old Eddie was referred to the
Special Needs Session and pre-staffed. He
was identified as having a serious wetting
problem as well as speech and language
delays. A parent conference was conducted
the same day in which the results of the
Special Needs Session were discussed with
Eddie's parents. As a result of the pre-
staffing and the parent conference a plan
for toilet training Eddie was established.

August 25, 1981

A Physical examination was performed at
Children's Medical Center by Dr. Porter.
The results indicated that Eddie was in no
distress, and there were not other apparent
medical reasons for the frequent wetting.
A urinalysis was also done, the results were
negative.

26

Potty-Training

We decided that Potty training should take place in an area that was isolated from other activities with few or no distractions. We chose a reinforcer that we knew was valued by Eddie and were confident that he would be willing to "work" for it. Other criteria that was established for the training was that the trainer would be firm and consistent, a charting system would be maintained both at home and in the center, and that baseline information would be compiled on Eddie's wetting behaviors prior to the beginning of the training.

Procedure

(The following general instructions were developed for toilet training all children and were used without modification in Eddie's training).

The child is shown where and what to do when he needs to urinate. During the potty training period activities should be planned for the child between the intervals that he goes to the bathroom. (i.e. table games, story books, etc.) The timer is set for 30 minutes, and the child is to be given juice every 5 minutes. He is reminded of dry pants (every 15 minutes). When trainer asks, "Are your pants dry?", trainer then reinforces dry pants with a chip, pretzel piece, or other salty edible reward. This reinforcer should be paired with verbal praise and social stroking. Also, the child is prompted to feel his "dry" pants. After timer goes off, the child is taken to the bathroom and told

27

(in terms familiar to him) to urinate in
the toilet. If he urinates in the toilet,
trainer overwhelms the child with verbal
praise indicating approval. If child wets
his pants, have him to change his clothing
himself, giving no attention or assistance
at all. Repeat this procedure all day for
three consecutive days.

(Follow-Up)

Teachers are to continue program pro-
cedure with the exception of the feeding
of juices and edible rewards. Gradually
increase the time to be taken to the bath-
room thirty minutes to forty-five minutes
to one hour, etc. Chart information where
indicated.

Daily Notes on Eddie's Training

Eddie, his teacher, and his mother
began the potty-training program in an
area isolated from other activities and
with as few distractions as possible.

10:00 a.m. -- His teacher felt his pants
and said to him "Your pants are dry",
"Good".

10:05 a.m. -- He was checked for dry pants
and reinforced for having "dry" pants with
small portion of saltine cracker. He was
then given another cup of juice.

10:15 a.m. -- Eddie was asked if he needed
to go to the bathroom. He responded by
nodding "yes". He was taken to the bath-
room where he urinated in the toilet. He
was reinforced for "peeing in the toilet".
Eddie experienced some difficulty getting

28

his underpants down, and he did get them
a little wet. His underpants were changed
so that he would be able to clearly dis-
criminate between "wet" and "dry".

10:26 a.m.-- Eddie was checked for dry
pants with physical and verbal prompts.
His pants were dry and Eddie was reinfor-
ced with a saltine and verbal praise.

10:28 a.m.-- Eddie got up and (it appeared)
communicated, with gestures, the need to go
to the bathroom. He was taken to the bath-
room where he urinated in the toilet. He
was reinforced with hugs and verbal praise.

10:42 a.m.-- His teacher checked him for
dry pants and he was reinforced.

10:55 a.m.-- He was checked for dry pants
and reinforced.

11:02 a.m.-- Eddie was asked if he needed
to use the bathroom. He responded by nod-
ding "yes". His teacher verbally modeled
"bathroom" and asked him to repeat the
word. He responded appropriately.

11:11 a.m.-- He was checked for dry pants
and reinforced.

11:14 a.m.-- The follow-up at home was
reviewed and the written procedure was
provided to his mother.
    The next day his mother came in and
began the potty-training procedure with
Eddie in an isolated area alone. The
Handicap Coordinator provided the necessary
materials and briefly reviewed the pro-
cedure, time, etc. and proceeded to assist
with other screenings. Eddie's mother doc-
umented that he went to the bathroom at

29

9:45 a.m., urinated and was prompted to flush the toilet and wash his hands when he finished.

10:13 a.m.-- He was again taken to the bathroom by his mother, urinated and followed the routine procedure.

10:33 a.m.-- The teacher intervened and asked Eddie if he needed to go to the bathroom. He nodded "yes" and he urinated in the toilet and was reinforced with praise and social stroking. When they returned to the area, Eddie began exhibiting behaviors unacceptable (i.e. running, climbing on furniture, refusing to comply, etc.) and his mother was asked to go out of the area for awhile so that the teacher could attempt to gain control. When his mother was completely out of visual contact, Eddie began to scream for her. The teacher explained to him that when he complied (show me dry pants) that he would be with his mother. He responded "no" and attempted to run away. He was physically restrained with his back to the teacher (no eye-contact and as little physical contact as needed to prevent him from running away). He continued to scream, and attempted to bite the teacher on several occasions. At the scheduled ten minute intervals, he was physically made to touch his pants as the teacher said "dry pants".

10:50 a.m.-- He was again made to touch his pants as the teacher said "dry pants".

10:56 a.m.-- Eddie had to get up and clean his face. The teacher took his hand as if they were leaving the area, stopped and asked him to show her "dry pants". He

30

responded appropriately by touching his
pants and repeated "dry pants" for which
he was reinforced with praise. They began
to walk again and then stopped and repeat-
ed the procedure. He again responded
appropriately and was given positive rein-
forcement. They walked to the bathroom
where he urinated in the toilet and was
heavily reinforced. After returning from
the bathroom the teacher reviewed with
Eddie's mother what had gone on and informed
her that she should not come in the next
day until she came to pick him up at the
end of the day.

Procedure for Eliminating Soiling Behavior

(The following instructions were given to
the teachers in the center for helping
Eddie complete his toilet training.)
     After Eddie finishes breakfast, take
him to the bathroom and have him sit on the
toilet (or potty chair) for approximately
five minutes (after you have explained to
him why he is there). The teacher should
reinforce him for eliminating in the toilet
with verbal praise and physical contact.
If Eddie does not have a bowel movement
during this time, allow him to get up and
return to center activities. Continue to
remind him at fifteen minute intervals
(from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m.). At 9:00 a.m.
take him to the bathroom repeating the
above procedure.
     If Eddie has a bowel movement on him-
self, the floor, etc., simply tell him,
"Eddie, go and change your clothes". A
teacher should accompany him to the bath-
room with his change of clothing and a bag
for the soiled ones. The teacher should
stand outside the bathroom door with her

31

back to him, communicating with him only
when it is absolutely necessary. He
should not be assisted in cleaning or
changing himself, except for tying his
shoes.

If he soils a particular area or
object, give him the cleaning aid and
direct him to "clean the chair". After
Eddie completes the clean-up, he should
be made to return the cleaning aid(s) to
the appropriate place.

The lack of reinforcement from the
staff members, and having to clean up
himself and the area soiled, should be
very unpleasant for him. Therefore, time-
out is not necessary.

The teacher should take Eddie to the
bathroom after lunch, also.

The effectiveness of this training
should be reviewed after one week.

NETWORKING NOW

Cecilia Hermosillo
Handicap Services Coordinator
Dolores Cox
Head Start Director
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INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS A CONSULTANT

Do you remember the first time you ever heard the word "consultant"? It was probably one of the "introductions" used to acquaint you with Head Start and it was more than likely preceded by, "workshop, conference or Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)".

Funk and Wagnall define consultant as "the interchange of counsel, advice or information; to have regard to as interest or duty". By Head Start standards, consultant would probably best be defined in terms of those few, carefully chosen individuals, who you encounter at training sessions of all scopes, from local workshops to national conventions, which can easily be identified by ribbons, (usually blue) streaming from name tags, that proclaim SPEAKER. If you have ever been involved in the selection process of consultants, you probably have first hand experience on the trials and tribulations of such endeavors.

OVERVIEW: THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION

Serving a total population of 1,292 Head Start families and staff, with individual and diverse needs, called for some type of methodology to be used in the selection process of T/TA consultants. El Paso is a large metropolis of approximately 450,000 people. Hence, resources are plentiful. The exact problem was identifying those resources and their areas of expertise from which Head Start families would benefit. Once the problem was defined, the exact methodology to be used, was revealed.

In the area of Social Service delivery of the El Paso program, an informal information and referral system had been constructed. This system provided a cross reference type of index, where needs and corresponding resources were identified. Since this system already identified resources, the question arose as to how it could be extended into the areas of finding and utilizing consultants for Head Start families and staff. More importantly, how could this be done at minimal or no cost to Head Start. The answer was simple. With continued use of the basic information and referral set-up, consultants and their areas of expertise were pinpointed.

THE INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SYSTEM

Basically, this information and referral system consists of a tapestry of

35

community resource directories, divided and
categorized into five basic "human need"
areas of self-fulfillment, egotistic, social,
safety and physiological; as defined by
Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Each resource
is then further identified by related
data, such a qualification requirements,
related services, etc. The actual process
of setting up an information and referral
system is an on-going time consuming ef-
fort. But once the bulk of the cata-
loguing is completed, the benefits reaped
are well worth it.

In adjusting the system for consul-
tant service, the process of identifying
related data was the "absolute." Once
a resource was categorized under a basic
need, the task remained to identify the
resources of expertise in a specialty area,
within the resource. Thus emerged the
concept of networking.

NETWORKING: THE WHATS AND HOWS

A network is a system or elements
(as lines of channels) that cross in the
manner of the threads in a net to make it
whole and workable. Evolved from this,
Networkingk then, is a process or system
of working with existing communities and
their agencies or programs to insure max-
imum service delivery to Head Start
families.

In order to use Networking for con-
sultant selection, three basic steps were
followed: rapport, program knowledge and
follow-up. (See Networking wheel)

Initially rapport was established by

36

47

NETWORKING WHEEL
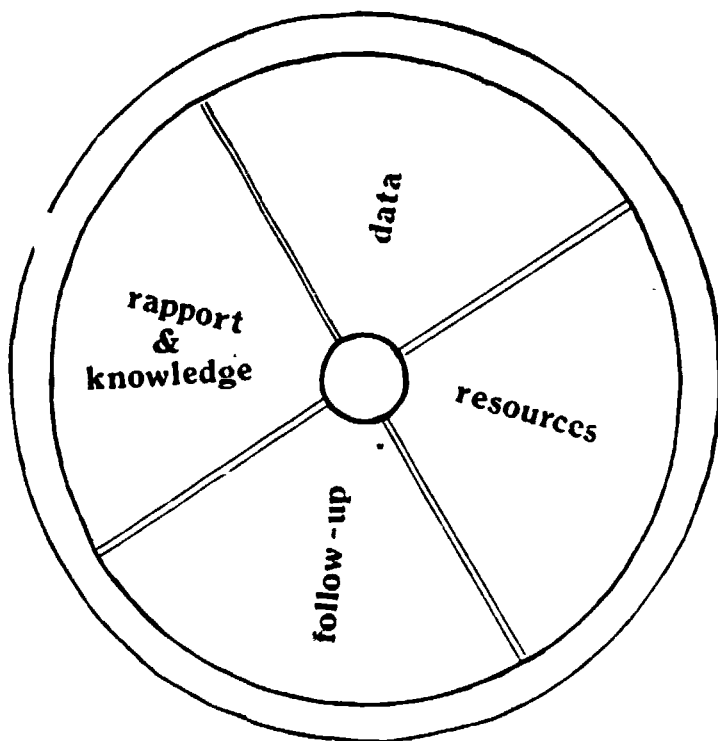
designating a contact person. At first
there was no special method for doing
this. For some resources, it was a mat-
er of a phone call and establishing a good
rapport with the person who answered, be
they a secretary, staff person, or agency
director. Other resources required an on-
site visit where both information and pro-
gram handouts could be exchanged. This
latter technique, proved to be most effect-
ive, as more information could be shared,
on a more personal level. Not only did
this on-site visit provide good, solid pro-
gram information, it afforded an opportun-
ity to share stories about "program people",
anything from high school adversaries to
birthdates and zodiac signs. Thus was
born the "Comadre Theory". Although it
has no English translation per se, a
"comadre" is the Spanish term for the rela-
tionship created between a child's mother
and god mother, thus explicitly implying
the possible strength of the rapport estab-
lished.
        Reflecting on step one usually re-
vealed step two, for the most part completed.
The responsibility to gather and learn
data about the resource fell highly on the
Head Start representative. In doing so,
all areas of expertise within that resource
could be discovered, noted, and tapped
for future use. Equally as important,
expecially in Networking for consultants,
was the information given to the source on
Head Start. It was found that when time
came to utilize a resource consultant,
the more they knew about Head Start and its
functions, the more effective the train-
ing proved to be.
        Finally, step three completed the
process with some type of follow-up. This

38

49

basically consisted of irkind documenta-
tion or payment issuance as necessary,
copies of all T/TA evaluations and a thank-
you letter, tnus serving both Head Start
and the resource with required documenta-
tion. Also, and probably most importantly,
this final step, allotted Head Start the
opportunity to remind the·resource of
accessibility to them in any way Head Start
could help their efforts in service delivery.
Thus, the process was completed.

TRAINING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

A basic for networking lies in the
fundamental philosophy that for staff
liaisons from any organizations to be suc-
cessful and effective in networking, these
same staff members must be equipped with
the basic tools necessary for effective
public relations. Training for network-
ing is therefore a necessary ingredient in
the process and the El Paso County pro-
gram has designed and operated the follow-
ing program:

1. Verbal Skills and Negotiations Tech-
    niques/Strategies

    Component Coordinators and Center
Directors are given training sessions on
public speaking. Role playing sessions are
video taped for reviewing and critiquing. Fact
sheets are drawn up giving historical, sta-
tistical and current data on the program.
Each staff person receives copies of these
fact sheets and becomes articulate on the
characteristics of the program. Reports

39

50.

on the longitudinal studies of the effects
of quality pre-school programs are summar-
ized, and distributed to staff members
for additional selling data.
A final touch of salesmanship training
of staff, professional business cards are
printed. For $25 for 1,000 business cards
each staff member and Policy Council Rep-
resentative receives his/her own profession-
al business cards. The individual's names
and titles are typed in with a clear elite
type.

2. Parent Training

To monitor, assess, and document the
parent training at both the center level
and the County Policy Council level, a
checklist has been devised. This checlist
itemizes the topics for training the par-
ticipants, the trainers, the timeline and
most importantly the person responsible.

<u>Month</u>   <u>Topic</u>   <u>Participants</u>   <u>Trainers</u>

<u>Person Responsible</u>

The checklist at the individual cen-
ters or classrooms itemized such topics as
"What is Head Start?" the "Child's Daily
Schedule," etc. The entire center staff,
(directors teachers, aides, cooks, social
workers, nurses) all take part in the train-
ing and are listed under "Person Responsible"
for certain topics. For specialized topics
(i.e. parenting skills), professional con-
sultant services are solicited at minimal
or no cost.

40

Professionals in the mental health
field are given the opportunity for exposure
to the public. This is an advantage for the
consultant to enhance his/her opportunities
for clients through this exposure. This
is also a credit to his/her personal rec-
ord of services to the community.

Other professionals in other fields
are requested as guests of honor or keynote
speakers to various functions. These
same persons are further exposed to the
Head Start Program and it's needs. It is
then that the selling of the program real-
ly begins. We have been fortunate enough
to have services not solicited but offered!
One example is the securing of our health
services (physical examinations) from ped-
iatricians at a lower rate than previously
contracted. This was the result of utiliz-
ing these pediatricians in workshops as
presenters and keynote speakers while explain-
ing the wonders of Head Start. We were
very careful to publicly recognize them for
their contributions.

3. College and University Training for
   Parents

The local community colleges and uni-
versities have staff who are familiar with
and have worked with the Head Start CDA pro-
grams. These same staff and/or university
students are requested and become a valuable
resource for training. College students are
often placed for part of their study in
classroom settings.

The community college also receives
imput from the Head Start Program, on work-
shop and training needs of the general com-
munity. We have been successful in the de-
velopment and implementation of Saturday and

41

evening workshops and classes for our staff and parents. The Community College also picked up on a one year pilot project funded by the Educational Service Center for language and concept acquisition teaching. With the Head Start Program's initiation, encouragement, and endorsement, it was incorporated into the Community College curriculum under the Continuing Education Department and credit toward CDA certification was offered to all participants.

Other agencies (i.e. El Paso Women's Resource Center) collaborates with the Head Start Program for grant monies to conduct courses for women on parenting, employment resources, etc. The Social Service agency provides the staff trainers, the funding agency provides the financial resources and the Head Start program provides the participants.

4. Examples of Training Resources Used

Various social service agencies in the community have collaborated with the Head Start program in establishing a Speaker's Bureau. These agencies have assigned a liaison staff person to work with our parent groups in the presentation of information about the agency. Utilizing this method and again gaining more exposure and recognition for the individual agency has opened doors for their services at minimal or no cost to the program.

42

EXAMPLES OF CONSULTANT SERVICES AVAILABLE

RESOURCE	SERVICES
1. Fort Bliss Air Defense	- Trainers and facili-ties for conference
2. Texas Tech Academic Health Center	- Trainers and Health Services
3. Foster Grandparent Program	- Volunteer Services
4. RSVP (Retired Sen-ior Citizens Volun-teer Program)	- Volunteer Services
5. Educational Service Center	- Trainers and Training
6. El Paso Women's Re-source Center	- Trainers and Training

RESULTS:

The set-up of information and refer-
ral with modifications for finding consul-
tants or Networking proved to work well and
easily, It was found that with the on-going
cataloquing and updates, resources were not
only identified, but accumulating and chang-
ing constantly to meet the needs of our large
Head Start population. Furthermore, once
the inital ground work is laid, a resource
can be utilized as many or as few times as
chosen.

43

Networking serves a multipurpose function. Because of the on-going need for T/TA, without an effective system, such needs can expend a great deal of time and money. This system can meet those needs at little or no cost. It provides Head Start staff and families with a vast κc ⋅ ng knowledge of community resources and .ie people that make those resources work. Finally, when those same resources call upon Head Start to provide their population with T/TA services, it affords staff with professional growth and career development opportunities, a primary goal in project Head Start.

Networking is a notion conceived out of information and referral, which in turn is but a new name for a tried and true method ιor service delivery in all areas. Networking in Head Start is a process who's time has come. Social Service agencies, such as Head Start, are no longer a part of the "spend free sixties", for the eighties hιve brought on a wave of accountability. A process, as Networking, may at first appear to be time consuming, but proves to be a cost-effective and profitable method in time.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Head Start is but a par_ of a vast number of prog_ams concerned with serving children and families. Agencies, such as these, co-exist with Head Start in communities throughout the United States all play-vital roles in the development of the same target population. When Head Start joins forces, through the utilization of resources, services ⋅ children and families are

44

enhanced and mutual benefits are derived.

A great asset in using Networking in El paso is our urban setting. Many Head Start programs, however, are located in rural areas. In these cases, the need for Networking is twice fold. For use in a smaller program area a few changes would be suggested. Primarily, a rural program's accessibility to community resource directories may be non-existant. The problem would than appear to be in finding a source to provide primary information for building a referral and information system. The easiest solution would be to look in the area telephone book yellow pages. It provides a general categorization of agencies under services, as well as the basic preliminary information such as phone numbers and addresses.

Another area that may pose problems for rural programs, are limited resources. What may be surprising is the expandability and numberous areas of expertise within one resource alone. Also, when agency resources are limited, those resources identified through Networking, may be able to further identify for you other community resources previously unknown to your program, and so the Networking wheel rolls on.

CONCLUSION: NETWORKING NOW

The time has come for Head Start and others in service to children and families to unte in efforts. Head Start continues to grow and prosper in its seventeeth year, in spite of proposed program changes.

45

Accountability must now take a key role
in the basic operation of Head Start. It
is through, systems such as Networking that
both continuous growth and development can
be insured for project Head Start.
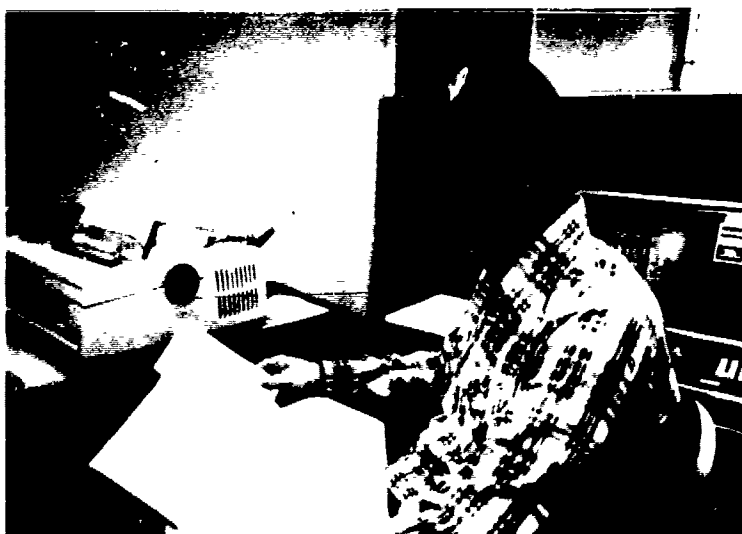
HOW TO SURVIVE AN AUDIT

John Widner
Executive Director
Day Care Asso. of Ft. Worth and Tarrant Co.

Audits arouse feelings that run the
gamut from reluctance to discomfort to
stark fear. An old story about audits
seems to illustrate this. The question
is posed as to the two biggest lies in
the world. The personnel of the agency
to be audited at the entrance interview
tell the auditor, "We are happy to have
you here". The auditor then replies,
"Thank you. I am very glad to be here".
    Both parties are visualized as lying
through their teeth. This undoubtedly is
exaggerated, but it does illustrate that
audits are seen as burdensome, intrusive,
and even as unnecessary. Why are audits
viewed in this manner when they have been
conducted in Head Start since the incep-
tion of the program and are annual re-
quirements that have to be complied with?
The probable reason is that many persons
are unfamiliar with the purpose of the
conduct of audits or equate them with
suspicion as if there is something dis-
honest going on.
    The Day Care Association of Ft. Worth
and Tarrant County has developed a frame-
work for the conduct of audits that has
enabled its personnel to look at them as
constructive and essential management tools
that are indispensible to program oper-
ation. The framework did not develop

48

overnight, but was the result of years of
experience in dealing with audits.   This
article is an attempt to share the process
developed by the Ft. Worth program, which
will, hopefully, bring some perspective
to the conduct of audits and to show that
they need not be excruciatingly painful
and, indeed, that they are helpful.   This
is written for Executive Directors of grant-
ees, Head Start Directors, and other prog-
ram personnel.   It is from ⅃ie Manager's
viewpoint and is not intended to be a man-
ual or guidelines for accountants or aud-
itors, per se.   It is intended to be help-
ful in planning, conducting, and resolving
audits, as well as setting up systems and
dealing with issues that come up when audits
occur.

PURPOSE OF AUDITS

An audit's primary purpose is to ver-
ify what happens in a program in terms of
numbers.   As recipients of both federal and
non-federal funds, grantees and their del-
egates, if any, are held accountable by
their funding sources for verifying their
projected, as well as actual, results.
The back-up data or documentation of that
program is carefully screened; also, fin-
ancial documents of all types are checked
to ensure that they are correct and that
they represent the on-going activities.
Personnel records are reviewed, as are
property control measures.
Audits, also, allow for verification
that expenditures are in line and consis-
tent with the work program.   Those who

49

are responsible for carrying out programs, such as Head Start, know that all funds expended must be for approved program purposes only. Funds may not be expended at the discretion of administrators, Board, or the Policy Council. Audits, therefore, assist in determining whether the expenditures that have been made are in line with the approved budget and work program as determined by the funding agent.

Another purpose of audits is the assistance that they provide to programs in helping them look at the entire system in place and, therefore, make a determination if their operating controls and procedures are sufficient and appropriate. This is a useful and constructive function and a popular one with program administrators. The design of the financial management system which ensures that budget management, control over operations and adequate documentation is tested during the conduct of audits. In addition, the design also tests the provision of accurate and complete disclosure of financial matters.

To say that all programs are examples of honest operations and functions, without a trace of deception, would be to stretch the truth. Audits do look for fraud and illegal practices and they do find them. Fortunately, the vast majority of Head Start programs are sound and follow good management practices so, in most instances, illegal doings do not enter into consideration.

Head Start programs have been federally mandated to conduct an annual audit. Without it, the program is subject to losing its funding. The federal government uses the conduct of audits as an accountability measure along with others, such as pre-

reviews and CMR (Consolidated Measurement and Review). Local programs, also, are helped by the annual audits, in that they are used as evaluative measures to judge the soundness of the agency; particularly, the fiscal part of it.

All program operations, including accounting, personnel management, or aspects of a programmatic nature such as the selection and purchase of materials and equipment, are enhanced by the auditing process. This, then, is the main purpose for conducting audits. The time when audits were looked upon only as evaluative measures of the accounting department have long passed and we now know that all agency operations, to a degree, are involved in the process. Audits are excellent tools for program administrators and they are indespensible to a good management system.

TYPES OF AUDITS

There are different types of audits that can be conducted and the type selected is dependent on the need that is to be fulfilled. Program administrators should be familiar with these so that they may request the one that they need. For Head Start purposes, there are three types of audits that can be conducted. These are as follows:

1. Internal Audits - These are audits that are conducted by program staff and are carried out to test the effectiveness of the internal control procedures that are in place. Internal audits are

51

sometimes conducted before independent
and federal audits as a means of prepara-
tion or to determine the financial pic-
ture of the agency.

2.   Independent Audits - These are audits
conducted by Certified Public Account-
ants (CPAs) who represent private account-
ing firms. Independent audits can be con-
ducted to ascertain the effectiveness of
the accounting system in place, to audit
the operation of programs such as Head
Start, and/or to accomodate changes in
local administration (i.e. the Executive
Director).

3.   Government Audits - These are audits
conducted by federal auditors for spec-
ific programs such as:

1.   Department of Health and Human
     Services.

2.   United States Department of Agri-
     culture.

PREPARATION FOR AUDIT

     As in any other endeavor, preparations
for the activity, whatever it happens to
be, is the key to a successful outcome.
This principle also holds true for conduct-
ing audits. The local program should have
a planned timetable with projected dates
listed for critical checkpoints. Checkpoints
that should be covered are the program year
end, selection of auditor, conduct of the
audit, audit review procedures by staff and

52

the Board, and final submission of the completed audit to the required sources. Use of a system that plans for and carries out these functions as scheduled will assist programs in meeting audit deadlines and the auditing process will proceed smoother.

Selection of the auditing firm is another major task of the preparation process. Care must be taken to select an auditor or auditing firm that has no ties with the Head Start program to avoid any semblence of conflict of interest. The auditor must be a duly Certified Public Accountant (CPA) and be able to meet standards of independence. A discussion of auditing fees should take place and the process for determining the cost of the audit should be a part of the written agreement to be entered into between the parties involved. This agreement is termed a Letter of Engagement and it should be specific enough to let the auditors know what is expected of them. The auditors must be provided with an audit guide available from the funding source.

HOW TO GET A GOOD AUDIT

Good audits do not just happen, one must make them happen. It certainly helps if a good, smooth, and efficient operation is in place. Programs who have a system with rules and procedures clearly spelled out and with a staff that can implement them, are well on their way to conducting a good audit. Toward this end, the ser-

vices of an accounting consultant can
assist the program managers and the Board,
as well as the accounting staff in prepar-
ing for such a task. A consultant can
outline procedures that are normally fol-
lowed in the auditing process and this can,
also, identify the "bookkeeping tasks"
that can be done by staff so that the
auditors do not spend an inordinate amount
of time on this type of work. The consul-
ant could, assist in providing guidance in
the selections of the auditing firm by
explaining what to look for and how to
arrive at an equitable auditing fee.
    Programs can help themselves in
having a good audit by involving the
Board in the auditing process. If the
Board has an audit committee, it would be
wise to keep them informed and involved
in every stage of the audit. Using this
strategy could result in facilitating
the acceptance of the final audit report
when it is presented to the Board.
    Program managers can enhance the
auditing effort by functioning as res-
ponsibly inquisitive individuals in the
day-to-day operations of the programs.
They can do this by asking questions of
staff who are involved with any aspect
of finance, whether it be purchasing,
collecting, or accounting of funds. The
questions that are asked should focus on
the operating procedures to see if they
are understood and followed and, also, to
check if the internal controls in place
are adequate. The managers should
know the budget and work program, inclu-
ding the regulations and standards appli-
cable to the program. The financial stat-
us of the program should be reviewed per-
iodically in conjuction with random eval-

uation activities. Finally, have as
much of the audit done by program per-
sonnel as possible. This saves time and
the auditing fees are reduced accordingly.
Training program personnel and the
Board who are involved in the auditing
process is a good strategy that can assist
in having a good audit. An explanation
of roles and functions must be under-
stood by all concerned and training ses-
sions that are on-going will assist in
this effort. Differentiating between
policy-making and administrative function
is helpful since many programs have had
difficulties with their audits as a result
of not knowing the difference between
the two roles. Management workshops that
cover these areas have been held regular-
ly and programs must avail themselves
of these opportunities.

CONDUCT OF THE AUDIT

When the formal audit starts, an
entrance interview is strongly recommended.
Key program personnel in addition to Board
representation, especially the audit co-
mmittee, should be in attendence. This
meeting should be held in a relaxed but
formal manner where the purpose and
scope of the audit are explained. The
process of conducting an entrance inter-
view actually serves a double purpose.
In addition to providing an explanation
to those key people mentioned, the inter-
view also prevents rumors from getting
started, which most often do not have a
base to them. The auditor should explain

55

the procedures that he is going to follow
and have some idea as to the people he
wants to talk to and he may even schedule
some appointments. The local program
personnel should made the auditor feel
welcome to help set the tone for conduct-
ing the audit.

During the audit, program personnel
needed by the auditor should be made avail-
able to the degree possible. Do keep in
mind that the program personnel must still-
be able to carry on their work, so plan
carefully to minimize any disruption in
their work schedules. It is recommended
that a staff person (usually the accoun-
tant) should act as a liaison between the
auditor and the program staff in secur-
ing requested materials and in setting
up appointments.

The auditor should schedule an exit
interview with the same key personnel and
Board members that attended the entrance
interview. This interview is intended to
be helpful and should be conducted in a
polite but formal manner. The purpose
of this meeting is to get a clear under-
standing of findings and implications, so
questions are encouraged.

PROBLEMS WITH AUDITORS

Occasionally, local program person-
nel do get into problems with auditors
and it is to the programs advantage to
resolve these as soon as practically
possible. When problem situations arise,

56

good faith should prevail as solutions are
easier found when this kind of attitude
exists. Many problems arise as a result
of miscommunication and these can be solved
easier if cool heads deal with them. There
may exist genuine differences of opinion
and these should be encouraged rather than
discouraged. This is particularly true
with guidelines that may be subject to
individual interpretation.

When problems do occur, program per-
sonnel should have a clear understanding
of what these are. The problem should be
identified and then an analysis should be
made to determine the best approach to
follow in resolving it. If the problem
identified by the auditor is a valid one,
do give ground and accept it, but ex-
plain your rationale for it if one exists.
If the auditor identifies an element of
your program operation as a problem but
you sincerely believe in it and can sup-
port it, do not give in without document-
ing and gathering supportive materials
to back you. It may even be necessary
to call in a third party to help resolve
the issue.

AUDIT RESOLUTION

After the audit has been completed,
accepted by the Board, and submitted
to the funding agency, the findings and
recommendations should be acted upon
with deliberate speed. Programs normally
have in place, as part of the auditing
procedures, a timetable for the resolu-
tions of audits and this should be followed.

57

In instances where a program needs assist-
ance in this particular area, obtain
assistance from the Head Start Training
and Technical Assistance office. An account-
ing consultant can advise local program
personnel as to how to proceed with these
matters.

If the audit can not be reconciled
by the prescribed timetable, an extension
should be requested from the funding source
with a revised time frame provided. Admin-
istrators and Board members should be aware
that failure to respond to the required
timetable established for the resolution of
audit findings tends to magnify the problem.
If problems exist because of disallowed
expenditures, negotiate and ask for a pay-
out over the long term. Remember that one's
primary role at this stage is to minimize
damage and prevent irreparable harm to the
program which serves children and their
families.

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

Audits are not the terrible tasks
hat they are made out to be. They are
positive and helpful tools that enhance
the management process. They are not only
program standards that have to be complied
with, but they are a fact of life and it
is best to deal with them in a realistic
manner. In the conducting of program assess-
ments or evaluations, they are indispensible.
The auditing process will proceed that much
smoother if you can prepare for it by hav-
ing clearly defined guidelines and procedures
that are followed. Audits are closed only

after the reconciliation process is com-
pleted, so the sooner acted upon, the
better.

Do remember that an audit that
finds your program "clean" and in proper
order can be a most satisfying feeling and
will enhance the administrator's credibil-
ity. This is a most psychologically sat-
isfying and comforting thought.

A METRO HEAD START NON-DELEGATED PROGRAM

Ruth Marshall
Head Start Director
Gulf Coast Community Service Association

The Gulf Coast Community Service
Association Head Start program (Houston)
through 1978 was delegated to ten commu-
nity groups. The result of this type of
operation was that the program seemed to
be going in ten different directions at
the same time. While this was not neces-
sarily bad in itself, the fact remained that
several of the delegates were not meeting
the minimum Head Start standards. This
caused much aggravation and concern to the
grantee because if any part of a program
is determined to be out of compliance,
then the total program is considered to be
out of compliance. The validation of the
Houston program in 1978 confirmed what the
grantee administration had suspected, which
was that the delegate agency structure,
as it existed, did not lend itself to com-
pliance.

DELEGATE AGENCY DIFFICULTIES

The delegate agency organizational
structure of the Houston program was creat-
ing several problems to the grantee and the
prime one seemed to be the inability if the
Head Start administration at the grantee
level to properly coordinate the program.
Though the delegates were autonomous enti-

61

ties in their own right, cooperation and
coordination were still necessary to a
successful program. The grantee Head
Start staff offered a variety of resources
in the major components, such as education,
social services, parent involvement,
health, volunteers, and handicap services,
but some of the delegates would not avail
themselves of these services. The same
was true of training opportunities that
were planned and carried out by the grantee.
Some of the delegates would not send their
personnel to these training sessions and as
a result, the effectiveness of the staff
suffered.

Program administrators know that the
key to operating a successful Head Start
program rests with the ability to imple-
ment a management system which will facil-
itate the staff in carrying out its funct-
ions. The Houston program was having a
most difficult time implementing its sys-
tem because of the delegates inability or
unwillingness to follow through. An example
of this difficulty was the central admin-
istrative's office request for program
information which was of a programmatic
nature. There was a lack of response from
some of the delegates, either because of
inalequacics in their internal reporting
systems or an absence of the management
skills needed to fulfill their responsibil-
ities. This had a negative impact on the
reporting requirements of the grantee and
the irregularity of the information flow
affected all aspects of the program.
A similar problem existed in the finan-
cial capapability of the delegates with some
of them having very good systems while
others were extremely weak. As a result,
the financial reports were often inaccurate,

late, and at times, were not submitted
at all.

Another serious problem that existed
and which affected staff morale was the
staffing patterns employed by the delegates.
Some of these programs had coordinators for
Head Start while other delegates did not.
These disparities created friction between
the delegates and the grantee as well as
with themselves. Related to this problem
was the touchy area of evaluation of per-
sonnel. Though the grantee did have a set
standard for evaluating staff, the manner
in which this was done differed among the
delegates. Some of the delegates were very
conscientious and did an excellent job.
Others conducted their evaluations in a hap-
hazard way and used untrained people in the
process. This created uncertainty in the
staff and caused disharmony.

All of these problems surfaced when the
Validation Team visited the Houston program
in 1978. The problems were not confined to
the administration component either. They
were spread out all over the entire pro-
gram and they were serious enough that they
were affecting the delivery of services to
the children and their families. There
were no easy solutions or recommendations,
but it was clear that something had to be
done to correct the problem.

GRANTEE OPERATED PROGRAM

After the Validation Team departed
Houston, the grantee administration, the
Head Start administration, and the Policy
Council met to assess the situation. This
planning group looked over all of the pro-

blem areas that had been identified and the recommendations made by the Team. It was decided by the group that in order to correct the deficiencies that had been noted, a new organizational structure was needed. Since the Validation Team has noted that the delegate agency arrangement used by the Houston program did not lend itself for compliance, the planning group decided to do away with it and have the grantee operate the program directly. This decision was not expected to be a popular one with the delegate agencies and it was expected that a lot of work would have to be done in order to sell the idea to the community groups, as well as to the Board. But the feeling of the planning group was that this action was needed to improve the overall quality of the program and it had to be taken.

The planning group felt that operating the program directly would be easier for the following reasons:

1. There would be one set of personnel policies that would apply to all staff. The evaluation of personnel would be conducted on a regular basis using the same procedures with the process being as standardized as much as possible.

2. The staffing pattern used for the centers would be based on the same criteria and based on the number of children served.

3. The information gathering and reporting procedures used would be the same for all the centers and the same timetable would be observed.

4. All financial accounting would be handled by the grantee using a standard format

for all fiscal systems. More accountabil-
ity would be exerted in financial account-
ing, purchasing of materials, and equip-
ment.

5. There would be closer supervision by
the Head Start Director and the component
heads to insure that the Head Start stand-
ards would be met and/or exceeded.

6. The areas identified by the Validation
Team as weak or in need of improvement
would be established as priorities and would
be focused on and corrected.

7. All training, both preservice and inser-
vice, was to be planned and implemented
by the Head Start Cent.al Office and would
become the first priority addressed.

IMPLEMENTING NEW STRUCTURE

The planning group's design of the new
structure was a difficult task in itself,
but implementation of that plan was much
harder. The idea of losing delegate stat-
us disturbed the community groups to no
end, but with constant efforts on the part
of the Head Start management staff in ex-
plaining the reasoning behind the decision,
the new structure was gradually accepted.
The governing board also questioned the need
for dropping the delegate structure but,
after much discussion and deliberation,
voted to accept the reorganization plan.
The Head Start management staff felt
that the key ingredient that would make
the new structure work would be a compre-
hensive training program that would be

65

HEAD START DEPARTMENT

Secretary — Director of Head Start — Accountant — Bookkeeper, Accounting Clerk

Executive Assistant

Head Start Program Coordinator | Multi-Lingual/Multi-Cultural Specialist | Parent Involvement Specialist | Administrative Specialist for Consortium Act. | Head Start Program Coordinator — Secretary

Clerk-Typist

Administrative Specialist | Center Directors | Parent Coordinators | Volunteer Coordinator | Education Specialist | Health Coordinator | Nutritionist | Psychological Associates | Social Service Spec.

Center Staff

Clerk-Typist

Nurses

Social Service Coord.

Education Coordinator

Special Education Trainers | Education Coordinator | Home Visitors

77

99

planned for and involve all of the staff.
Thus training became a high priority area
and it became mandatory for all staff.
The component heads were assigned the re-
sponsibility of developing specific plans
on how to implement the training. This
was done because earlier training had foc-
used mostly on the content of the train-
ing and not enough on the "how to" of
implementing the training, which was just
as important. It was also decided that the
content for the training sessions would be
based on the results of a needs assessment
that would be conducted periodically and
on special initiatives that would be under-
taken by the grantee from time to time.
Training schedules were established with
preservice planned for August, which would
last for one week, and inservice which
would be conducted for all staff a mini-
mum of one day a month. Plans were made
for the utilization of local staff to con-
duct as much of the training as possible and
to utilize outside consultants whenever
feasible.

Four types of training were identified
as being most helpful in training the staff
to function in the reorganized structure.
There were as follows:

1. Preservice - This training would be
for all staff and was to be undertaken
during the month of August. The content
for the workshop would focus on the staff's
role and how and where they fit into the
total organization. The training would
last for one week and would also cover
other areas identified in the need's assess-
ment.

2. Administrator's Workshop - This train-

ing session would involve all component
heads plus the director and assistant
director as well as other administrators.
It would be for one week and follow the pre-
service training session and emphasis would
be given to agency administrative procedures.
One day of this week's session would be devoted
to parent involvement training with
focus on the following areas:

A.   Working with parents
B.   How to treat parents
C.   How to relate to parents
D.   How to involve parents

3.   Inservice Training - All staff would
be involved in this type of training with
a minimum of one day a month reserved for
it.   The emphasis for Inservice would be
on content that would assist the staff in
becoming more competent in their roles as
determined by the need's assessment.   Also,
special initiatives undertaken by the grant-
ee would be incorporated into the Inservice
program.

4.   External Training - Since there are a
variety of other Head Start sources, such
as Leadership Development Training, State
Preservice, Regional and National Head
Start Conferences, as well as other work-
ships sponsored by Early Childhood Organ-
izations, the Houston program would par-
ticipate to the extent that training
would complement the local training plans.
The criteria for deciding whether to par-
ticipate in external training would be
based on the benefits that would be derived
for the Houston program, staff time, and
travel considerations.

An element that was added to the train-

68

79

ing design was the division of staff into
training levels or tracks in order to make
the training as relevant as possible.
In this manner, training could be individ-
ualized to meet the needs of the staff and
would also be more interesting and appeal-
ing. The training levels identified as
being the most appropriate were:

1. The Teaching Team - This would include
both teachers and aides.

2. The Nutrition Staff - Included here
would be nutritionists, cooks, and cook
assistants.

3. The Custodial Staff - Primarily cus-
todians and maintenance personnel.

4. Social Services and Parent Involvement
Team - Personnel who work in these two
components.

5. The Administration Team - This would in-
clude component heads, center directors,
and other administrators.

While the training that is conducted
is geared to these five levels, there are
some sessions in which more than one level
is involved and that may be due to the
nature of the training content itself.
The levels then are flexible to accomodate
these training needs though most of the
training that is conducted occurs at the
individual levels.

RESULTS OF NEW ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Gulf Coast Community Head Start program has been operating directly under the grantee without delegates for over three years and it has been a successful experiment. The program has functioned much smocther without many of the previous problems associated with the old, dele-gated structure that was in operation up until 1978. As a matter of fact, during the conduct of the Consolidaced Management Review (CMR) in the Fall of 1981, the Houston program fared much better than it did dur-ing the Validation visit of 1978. The CMR, which is a process established by the Administration for Children Youth and Families (ACYF) to monitor local program activity and to assist with local program development, fourld the Houston program to be in very good shape and in compliance with the standards. To a large degree, this was the result of the reorganizatoin of the program that took place.

Probably the area where the most improvement has been noted is in the area of staff development. The staff now under-stands the basis of how they will be eval-uated. The criteria is clearly spelled out and the process is standardized so that all personnel are evaluated objectively. The staff operate under one set of personnel policies and are aware of what they need to do in order to be promoted. The salar, schedule is consistent with the nature of the positior. held as well as with the exper-ience level. The staff is also provided with equal consideration for training opportun-ities and this has resulted in a renewed interest and increased participation in all

70

81

types of training. All of these changes
have led to a much improved staff morale,
which has impacted favorably the quality
of the total program.

The reorganization of the agency has
also reduced administrative costs. The
previously delegated program approach,
using the ten community groups as operators
of the program, had too many layers of
administration. The reorganized struc-
ture calls for the same central admin-
istrative unit to operate all aspects of the
program that existed previously, but the
other previous administrators have become
center directors or direct service pro-
viders rather than coordinators or other
administrators. This has made for a more
cost effective operation.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO OTHER GRANTEES

The grantee operated program model
developed by the Gulf Coast Community Organ-
ization is a good one for Houston. This
approach may also be a good model for other
Metros to emulate since it works well in
large urban settings. The metro nondel-
egated Head Start program is effective
because:

1. Program managers know exactly what is
going on.

2. Information of all types is readily
available.

3. Response time for action that needs
to be taken is shortened.

4. Priorities are more easily established.
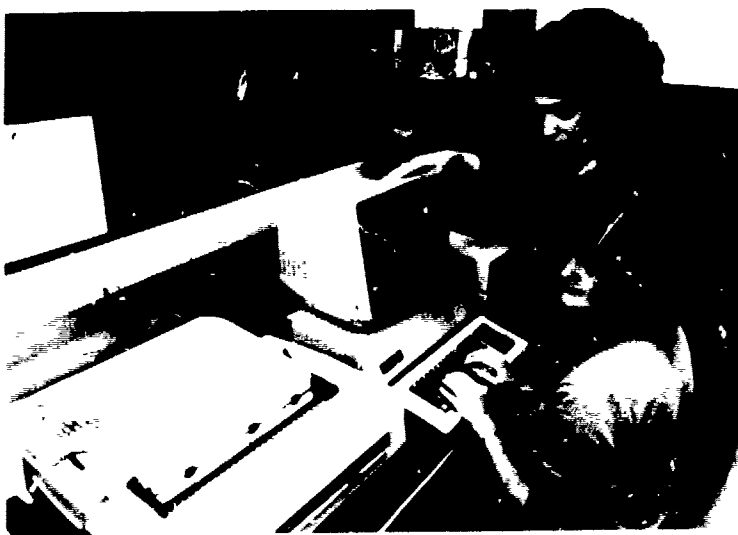
A MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS APPROACH FOR HEAD START

Blanche Russ
Executive Director
Adelina Fritz
Head Start Director Parent-Child, Inc.

In order for a program operation to
flow smoothly, it must have access to accur-
ate, timely, and relevant information. De-
cisions which affect program recipients,
staff, policymakers, and supportive social
agencies are constantly being made, which
are based on the information being provided.
If this information is incorrect, late, or
inappropriate, program operations will be
hampered by it, and the result may be low
staff morale, poor quality of services that
are dispensed, and a management system in
place which can not get the job done.

The Head Start program in San Antonio
found itself in a predicament in 1979, af-
ter having changed program sponsors from
a Community Action Agency to the present
grantee. Program administrators at this
time noted that information flowing into
the program had gaps in it and was not
continuous. They also discovered that the
data submitted by the various Head Start
centers did not substantiate the final re-
ports that had been based on that informa-
tion. Furthermore, it was found that the
documentation provided to back up that
data was also sporadic and not very relia-
ble. This led the program director and
component heads to conduct a thorough as-
sessment of the entire information gath-

73

ering-reporting system. The assessment
indicated basically that much of the infor-
mation needed for the Head Start program
was excluded and much of the information
requested by the former sponsor was of
little or no use for Head Start. The inad-
equacy of the system was confirmed also by
a team of Federal officials that conducted
an evaluation of the program and the idea
for the development of the Management
Information System (MIS) came into being.

MIS RATIONALE

With the operation of Project Head
Start transferred to the new sponsor,
Parent-Child Incorporated, a first prior-
ity was set and that was to develop the in-
formation gathering and reporting system.
This would help solve the discrepancies
that existed and improve the informa-
tion flow which would hopefully make for
a smoother functioning and cost effective
operation. It also would help the new
sponsor meet national, state, and local
standards.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR MIS

Administrators felt that the basis
for the developlment of the MIS should
be on program goals and objectives. In
this manner the new reporting system
would identify and provide information as
to the status of the primary purpose for
the program. Other considerations for the

system were :

1.   The Head Start standards were to be
incorporated by using the SAVI (Self-
Assessment Validation Instrument) as a
guide since it listed all requirements and
also provided specific guidance for assess-
ing compliance.

2.   The new system needed to provide infor-
mation to program managers within suffi-
cient time to allow them to react to pro-
blems before they became serious and got
out of hand.

3.   The system should identify program
needs to enable the administrators to
initiate new strategies in carrying out
the dictates of the program.

4.   The new system also had to lend itself
to the conduct of internal and external
assessments and evaluations, since these
were to be done on a systematic and on-
going basis.

5.   The last consideration for the design
of the new system was to address the costs
required for information gathering and
reporting with all attempts made to minimize
these with the ultimate goal of operating
a sound cost-effective program.
    The stage was then set for the final
document that evolved and this system is
now in use in the Parent-Child, Inc., pro-
gram of San Antonio, Texas. While modifica-
tions of the MIS will continue to be made to
accommodate changes in program goals and ob-
jectives, it is expected that this system
will be in place for a long time since it
meets the needs of the local program.

75

PARENT-CHILD, INCORPORATED

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P.O. Box 9313
San Antonio, Texas 78204
(512) 226-6232

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS REPORT
(MIS)

Month _____ Year _____

PROGRAMS:

HEAD START /____/

CITY FUNDED DAY CARE /____/

TITLE XX DAY CARE /____/

Prepared by: _____

Date Submitted· _____

_____   _____
· Executive·Director   Date

DESCRIPTION OF THE MIS

The MIS is an information gathering/
reporting system made up of a series of
forms designed to provide information to
the grantee on an up-to-the moment basis.
The system is a comprehensive one and add-
resses all of the Head Start components.
Information collected from the MIS can be
extracted quickly and efficiently to pre-
pare required reports to the local, state,
and Federal agencies needing the data.
In addition, the information is used to
inform the Board and the various parent
groups. Program administrators, component
heads, and center managers also find it
indispensible for planning purposes and it
also gives them a picture of what is going
on. The following information is obtained
through the MIS:

A. Enrollment and attendance reporting that
occurs on a daily, weekly, monthly, and year-
ly basis. Forms for this purpose are pro-
vided to individual classes, each center,
listing name, funding source, sex, age,
and ethnicity.

B. Center operations information that is
reported on weekly and monthly and which
addresses such areas as licensing capac-
ity, funded slots, staffing for centers
with emphasis on:
  1. Number of staff
  2. Staff vacancies
  3. Ethnicity, sex, and time and atten-
     dance records
  4. Inservice training sessions in-
     cluding attendees.
  5. Number of staff meetings and the
     agenda followed.

6. Type of centers, whether these
   are lead, satellite, or independent.
7. Funding source such as Head Start
   full day or part day, Title XX,
   or city funded.
8. Accidents, which includes the
   nature of the accident and how
   it happened.

C. The MIS also lists individual goals to
to undertaken with accompanying objectives
for each goal and also specifies the strat-
egy to be followed in achieving the object-
ive. The reporting for this type of infor-
mation is done both i. quantitative and
narrative form. This information is required
for each of the following components.
   1. Education - Including child assess-
      ments, language profiles, prog-
      ress reports/parent contacts,
      units being taught, field trips,
      and a description of the educa-
      tional program.
   2. Social Services - Includes home
      visits, referrals to and from other
      agencies, and a description of the
      Social Services Program.
   3. Health Services - Includes number
      of physical and dental exams,
      immunizations, and health advis-
      ory committee meetings and a de-
      scription of the health program.
   4. Parent Involvement - Includes infor-
      mation on policy council, policy
      committee, center committee meet-
      ings. Also includes information
      on parent training and a description
      tion of the parent program.
   5. Nutrition - Includes information
      on the numbers of lunches and break-
      fasts served, the number of meet-

·   ings the nutrition committee holds,
·   and training sessions for parents
·   and staff. Also a description
·   of the nutrition prog am is pro-
·   vided.
     6.   Handicap - Includes number of child-
          ren with types of handicapping
          conditions, children assessed and
          diagnosed, and the number of
          training sessions for parents
          and staff in addition to a de-
          scription of the handicap program.

D. Visitor information - The MIS allows for
the reporting of all visitors that go into
the centers. This includes visits from cen-
tral office staff, volunteers, and any oth-
ers.. The name of the visitor is listed,
as is the reason for the visit.

E. Problems encountered with suggested
solutions - A Unique aspect of the system
requests the identification of problem
areas with recommended solutions to those
problems . This often results with the
local centers solving their own problems
without the need for involving central
office staff.

TRAINING TO IMPLEMENT MIS

        In order to make the M nagement Infor-
mation Systems approach work, a rigorous
training program has been designed and is
implemented on a regularly scheduled bas-
is. Since the system is a precise one,
the center managers and the component
heads have to have a clear understanding of
it and be familiar with all aspects. The

failure of one person responsible for
gathering the data and recording it in the
appropriate manner can affect the results
of the MIS. So for this reason training
is paramount. Training for MIS is sched-
uled during pre-service with follow-up on
a monthly basis. For those persons new
to the system, one-to-one training is pro-
vided by the component heads.
    There are four levels of training for
the personnel in the Head Start program.
These are:

1. Level one is for the component heads
and the director who are primarily respon-
sible for compiling the data, interpre-
ting it, and making reports to the various
agencies.

2. Level two is for the center managers
who have primary responsibility for the
data gathering process.

3. Level three is for teachers, aides,
and social workers who have primary respon-
sibility for data gathering.

4. Level four is for center staff. This
includes all staff members that work at
the center level and that are responsible
for recording the data and compiling it in
the required forms for submission to the
central office.
    The Head Start program operated by
Parent/Child, Inc., from San Antonio has
developed a series of training modules
which have proven to be invaluable to the
training process. The modules are intro-
duced to the staff according to the level
of training being conducted. The train-
ing is divided into sections with rather

80

specific procedures spelled out as to how
it will be disseminated. The director
of the program and the component heads are
primarily responsible for the conduct of
MIS training.

RESULTS OF THE MIS

The implementation of the Management
Information System's approach to informa-
tion gathering and reporting has proven
to be an effective management tool for the
Head Start program. Reports to funding
agencies are submitted on time with the
included information much improved and with
documentation available for support. The
center managers have taken on a new role
in that they depend on themselves to get
the necessary information and run the
program. This in turn has provided them
with increased self-confidence and has made
them more responsible to the program.
Also, the fact that the center managers now
see the "total picture" and have access to
the large pool of information, they now
possess a better basis for decision-making
which has improved their management skills.
The new system has been in place for
awhile and the staff as a whole has accept-
ed it. This can be seen in the much improved
morale that they exhibit. Since a necessary
ingredient to the successful operation
of any endeavor is staff acceptance, hope-
fully this will result in a better program
for the children and their families.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: KEY TO PROGRAM OPERATION

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Council of South Texas-
Hidalgo County

Head Start is different! Unlike other
federal programs that only recommend and
encourage Parent Involvement, Head Start
mandates it. As a result of requiring
Parent Involvement and making it a Stan-
dard, Head Start has been and continues
to be a most successful program. This
can be attested to by various national
evaluations that have been conducted. The
Head Start program of the Community Action
Council of South Texas-Hidalgo County en-
joys a similar success and much of it is also
due to the emphasis that has been placed
on maintaining a very active Parent Invol-
vement component.

Program administrators long ago decid-
ed that in order to effect lasting positive
changes, the parents would have to learn
communication, organizational, and deci-
sion-making skills and make these a part
of their daily mode of functioning. The
program has been in the process of imple-
menting this particular goal and has made
considerable progress towards it.

94

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

The Community Action Council of South
Texas-Hidalgo County program serves over
1400 children and their families. It
covers an area that comprises the counties
of Jim Hogg, Zapata, Starr, and Hidalgo;
and includes both urban and rural settings.
Unfortunately, the parents from this pro-
gram have historically been excluded from
mainstream activities because of their
low-income status, language barriers, and
limited educational levels. As a result
of this non-involvement in community
affairs, their communication skills were
not developed in a sufficient manner to
allow for the voicing and sharing of common
concerns nor to undertaking activities that
would be of benefit to their children and
themselves.

The exclusion from participation in
mainstream activities has also affected
the learning of the organizational skills
that parents need in order to come together
in group settings to deliberate and act
on matters of concern to the program. Such
aspects as how groups are formed, their
purpose, how business is conducted, and
the influence that these groups generate
were not fully understood and utilized.
The lack of communication and organizational
skills has, also, led to an inability to
learn about the process of decision making,
a skill very much needed in our society.

When the goal for providing parents
with communicational, organizational, and
decision-making skills was established,
it was recognized that it would be dif-
ficult to achieve. However, the program
managers felt that it was not only logical,

but necessary in order to operate a success-
ful program that would meet the needs of the
children and their families. Pursuing this
goal would also ensure that there would be
some continuity and follow-through after
the children had left Head Start. The ad-
ministrators set out to make this happen.

DESIGN FOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT

The development of goals for any
endeavor is usually an easy matter, but the
manner in which they are carried out is
probably the more difficult task. Such
was the case with the design for implemen-
ting the skill development program. After
much deliberation, it was decided that
there would be a lot of emphasis placed
on exposing parents to people, places,
and things. This would take the form of
inviting public officials, agency heads,
professional consultants, and other key
personnel to meet with the parents. The
strategy would allow for identification
with role models and learning what these
people were all about.
Next, it was decided that parents would
be encouraged to participate in meetings,
workshops, and conferences at the local,
state, regional, and national levels. Par-
ticipation in these activities would pro-
vide them with an understanding of what
happens at those levels and also give them
an idea of what the total picture looks
like. Exposure to places like Detroit,
Los Angeles, Denver, Dallas, Austin, Houston,
and other major cities where these func-
tions take place would give the parents
opportunities to develop an awareness that

would foster self-growth.

The third aspect of the skill devel-
opment program dealt with "things" which
were defined as activities that would be
generated jointly by the parents and staff.
Included here would be fund-raisers, vol-
unteerism, socials, and other special
functions. These activities would offer
learning opportunities to enhance commun-
ication skills through group discussions,
interactions with others, and the use of
informative materials. The activities would
also heighten awareness of how organiza-
tional skills are developed through such
means as dividing tasks among the partic-
ipants, establishing time schedules to
achieve objectives, and by observing con-
structive projects come into being through
the cooperation of all involved. Lastly,
decision-making skills would be learned
through the process of contributing and shar-
ing ideas that would be decided upon by the
whole group after active discussion and con-
sideration had been provided.

The design for the skill development
training program was not created by staff
administration alone. Parents were active
participants in its development and the Pol-
icy Council approved of its various aspects.
The whole process took a lot of time since
there was much discussion and some of the
issues that arose were rather complex and
at times divisive. However, the question
of how to incorporate in the Parent Involve-
ment program a process for developing the
needed skills was answered. This would be
accomplished through activities that would
teach parents communicational, organization-
al, and decision-making skills.

86

THE EVENTS

King and Queen Contest

It was decided that an activity that would tea :h parents communicational, organizational, and decision-making skills and which would have positive side affects, such as involvement of the community was a fund-raiser. An activity of this type would also assist in raising funds that the par;nts themselves could use (eg. travel purposes). Program administrators reasoned that the proposed fund-raiser would do the following:

1.   Provide parents with the opportunity to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the activity.

2.   Assist parents in determining the manner to pursue the activity. Involved in this process would be a plan for organizing the event, spelling out roles for participants, and setting time schedules for the conduct of the activity.

3.   Teach parents about the processes for decision-making by deciding such aspects involved as to who would participate, who would implement the project, when the activity would take place, and where it would be held.

The King and Queen contest involved all of the children in the program. Every classroom selected a King and a Queen candidate based on the highest number of votes cast. Each vote represented one penny which had been raised on behalf of the candidate through cake sales, dances, flea

markets, or through cannisters that had been set up in stores. The children that were selected as Classroom King and Queen then competed against one another in each center to determine the Center King and Queen. The winners were selected on the basis of those that had received the largest number of votes. Each center's King and Queen candidates then competed against one another and the highest vote getters were selected as the Head Start King and Queen.

This activity was an outstanding success in that the parents learned a lot about cooperation, communication, organization, and making decisions. It also served as a means of getting the community actively involved in Head Start. Secondarily, the parents raised close to $30,000 in this one function which was used to pay expenses for other activities such as travel for meetings, workshops, and conferences. The policy council and each of the centers shared in the proceeds.

Annual Field Day

The Community Action Council of South Texas-Hidalgo County program planned and conducted another activity that was very well received by the children, parents, staff, and community. It was such a success that the program administrators decided to make it an annual event. The activity is called The Annual Field Day and it has, as its objective, the meeting of all program children, parents, staff, and the community in a field setting where the children participate in the following events:

89

102

1. Foot racing
2. Sack racing
3. Tricycle race
4. Football throw
5. Obstacle course

Children compete according to their own age and sex with ribbons being awarded to the first four winners in each event. All children' who participate are provided with "participant" ribbons to show that they have participated. This particular activity is designed to do the following for parents:

1. Parents participate in the planning of the event.

2. Parents help publicize the event by going on radio, notifying media, and appearing on television.

3. Parents assist in conducting the events by acting as judges, directing traffic, handing out the awards, and looking after the children.

By conducting this particular function, parents learn to communicate with people at various levels such as staff, newspapers, radio, public officials, and others. The planning phase offers parents opportunities to learn how to organize events. schedules, volunteers; and, how to deal with organizational problems. Parents function on committees such as transportation, public relations, food, clean-up, and program which provides them with an insight as to how committees function.

Parent-Volunteer Recognition Banquet

A third function which allows for skill development for parents is the Parent-Volunteer Recognition Banquet. This is also an annual event that allows for much parent input. The stated purpose for the activity is to honor and recognize those parents and volunteers who have contributed to the program, but the secondary purpose is to help parents with their skill development.

The banquet helped the parents and provided them with many learning opportunities. Parents served on the planning committees and assisted the staff with decorations, menus, awards and certificates, site selection, as well as with the program. These experiences helped them to learn about planning, implementing, and evaluating activities.

Graduation Event

The final major activity of the Community Action Council of South Texas-Hidalgo County program is the Annual Mass Graduation that takes place in May. This has been a very successful function that is normally attended by a standing-room only crowd. Children from all the centers who are leaving Head Start and beginning their public school careers are awarded Head Start Diplomas before an audience that consists of their parents, other family members, and the community at large. Public officials, and other dignitaries are invited and the program usually gets a lot of publicity.

The success of this activity is again due to long and careful planning
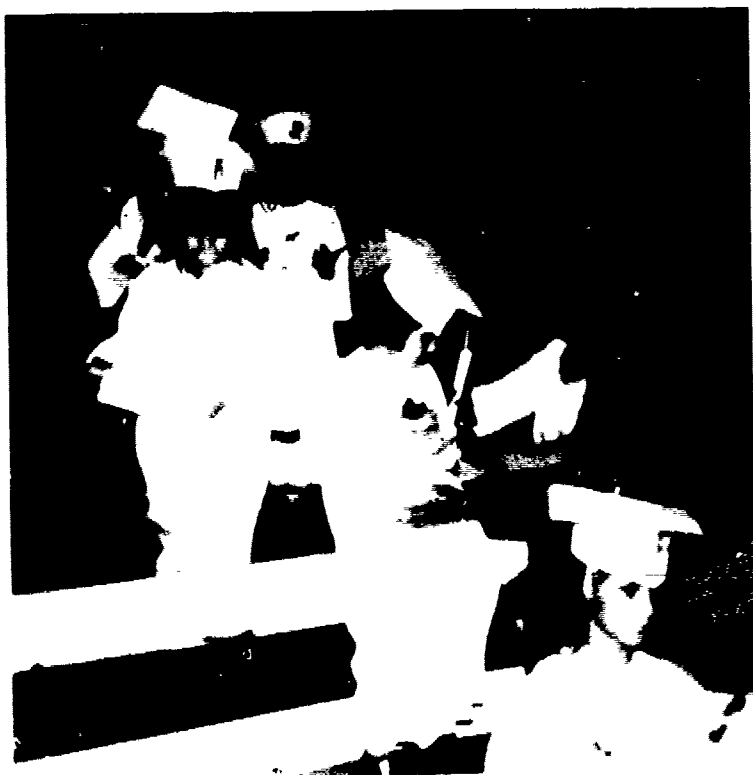
that involves both staff and parents,
Usually the planning phase begins during
the month of September with the Policy
Council approving the activity and commit-
tees are named to work in the various
facets including publicity, decorations,
transportation, program, location, and
clean-up. During these committee planning
ses-ions, parents learn to·express their
opinions as well as to listen to the opin-
ions of others. They also have opportun-
ities to look at how the various tasks
are organized and how the whole activity,
"comes together" as a result of the
careful planning and hard work that makes
it happen. They also see and participate
in the various decisions that have to be
made regarding the conduct of the activ-
ity. This type of involvement is a most
practical and sensible method of teaching
parents skills that they use in everyday
situations.

TRAINING TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

The execution and success of The Parent
Involvement program that has been descri-
bed is largely due to the training that
has been designed and implemented. It
is the feeling of the administration that
training is the element that will provide
both staff and parents with the skills that
they need in order to function effect-
ively in their respective roles. All train-
ing sessions underscore the importance and
need of parents and staff working toget-
her. The local program administrators
also involve outside consultants and the

94

Regional Training Officers both in plan-
and conducting the training sessions.
This has proven fruitful in finding and
securing resources that are used in the
various training sessions that are carried
out in the individual centers, at local
cluster sites, and at the total program
level. Both staff and parents are encour-
aged to attend training sessions at state,
regional, and national levels with the un-
derstanding that the information gained
is to be brought back and shared with
others. In this manner, other program
staff and parents also profit from that
training at little or no increase in costs.

RESULTS OF THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT
PROGRAM

While no formal evaluation of the
Parent Involvement program has been conduc-
ted, program administrators and parents
themselves are happy with the results.
South Texas Head Start parents function in
leadership roles in the State Parents
Association, at regional meetings, and at
the National level. Locally, they have un-
dertaken advocacy roles on behalf of Head
Start and other programs for children.
Parents understand the function and op-
erations of local organizations and agen-
cies and work to incorporate these into
their Head Start program. These activities
on the part of parents show that they
have learned communicational, organiza-
tional, and decision-making skills, and
are making use of them.